

turned a beautiful building into something much more, the heart of a community. I want to congratulate the congregation of Saint Hyacinth; the good works they have done serve as an example of all that a community can and should be.

TRIBUTE TO ELBERT GARCIA, RECIPIENT OF THE LATINO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S TRAILBLAZER AWARD

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Elbert Garcia, an extraordinary gentleman to whom I was first introduced when he was an American Political Science Association fellow in my congressional office, and who is now a media and policy analyst currently employed at my New York District Congressional office.

I commend the Latino Alumni Association of Columbia University on their decision to bestow their first annual Trailblazer Award on a group of exceptional individuals that included Elbert Garcia.

I was very pleased to find that this unique and very first annual Trailblazer award was presented April 1st during a celebration of the diversity and achievements of Columbia's Latino alumni appropriately called "El Regreso." The Columbia University alumni honorees consist of Marcel Agueros, Rafael Collazo, Jennifer Duran, Michael Maldonado, Vivian Santiago, and last but certainly not least, Elbert Garcia. The group was cited because "their dedication, vision, and representation of a wider movement were instrumental to the creation of the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race."

In 1995, this group of Latin American students at Columbia were frustrated that the initiatives to bring the history of ethnic studies to their campus continued to result in failure. They were determined to draw attention to their plight by staging a non-violent hunger strike. The strike ended in the arrest of 22 students and the resulting media coverage of the arrest finally propelled Columbia and its lack of ethnic studies into the national spotlight. This publicity served as a wake-up call to the powers that be and ultimately led to change which resulted in the creation of Columbia's Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race. That Elbert was a leader of a group who had the strategic vision, self-discipline, determination and persistence to succeed is not a surprise to me because these are qualities which Elbert exhibits in his professional and personal life.

I know Elbert to be a dedicated family man with great conviction.

A Washington Heights-born freelance writer, Elbert has written about politics, music and culture for such publications as The Source, Urbanlatino Magazine, The New York Post and the Manhattan Times. The 31-year old son of Dominican immigrants has also worked as Web producer at MSNBC, the New York Times, and Philadelphia-based Latino news Web site, LATNN.com.

Elbert earned a B.A. in Urban Studies with a specialization in Political Science while

being an active student leader at Columbia University. In addition to helping to establish the school's Latino Studies program and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, he served as one of founders of Columbia University's undergraduate Dominican organization, El Grupo Quisqueño and managing editor of the multicultural magazine Roots & Culture.

Prior to entering the field of journalism, Garcia worked several years as alumni counselor and supervisor at the Prep for Prep program, a New York City leadership development organization that works with students of color from fifth grade through college. He was also one of the early organizers of the New York International Latino Film Festival.

Elbert spent a year working on Capitol Hill as a 2002-2003 American Political Science Association Congressional (APSA) Fellow, the oldest and most prestigious Capitol Hill fellowship program. Elbert rejoined my New York staff on a part-time basis in January, 2006. A product of the Ethical Cultural Fieldston School and the community's gifted and talented magnet school, Mott Hall, Elbert currently resides in the Upper Manhattan neighborhood of Inwood with his wife, Grissel.

Elbert's background in media relations and journalism has proven to be an invaluable asset as he assists me in communicating and implementing the role of government in the lives of the constituents of the 15th congressional District. Elbert is a non-assuming, focused and savvy analyst who genuinely cares about people. He is dedicated to ensuring that the needs of our constituency are met. I am particularly proud of the great strides Elbert Garcia has made not only at Columbia University but also in his service to the residents of the 15th District of New York City.

I salute and congratulate Elbert Garcia along with the five other honored Columbia alumni for the fortitude and bravery displayed in 1995 that brought about positive change that continues to benefit Columbia University to this day. I also salute Elbert for his continued work for the public in his chosen field.

At a time of sharp difference between us on the question of immigration policy, we all should keep in mind these words of Elbert Garcia. To quote Elbert, "A nation steeped in ethnic studies would not be in such a hurry to punish its immigrants."

TESTIMONY OF STEVE GRANDSTAFF

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, my constituent Steve Grandstaff is shop chairman of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 651, which represents hourly workers at Delphi East in my hometown of Flint, Michigan.

For the record I would like to read an excerpt of the electronic testimony that Steve wrote for the Education and the Workforce Committee e-hearing on the impact of the Delphi bankruptcy filing:

I am the Shop Chairperson of UAW Local 651 in Flint, servicing Delphi Flint East and representing 2,800 hard working people. Early on in this whole saga I had a realization what the whole issue boils down to.

I refer to it as the promise; the promise was part of the deal. The deal was that you came to work and did your job for 30 years and at the end of that time you could have the opportunity to go on your way with a somewhat comfortable pension to see you through your later years.

The workers' end of the promise was that they worked the off shifts for the first decade of employment. This meant working the hot days in the summer and the cold ones in the winter. That in itself meant that you were at work when your family and your friends were working normal hours and enjoying life.

The promise meant that you worked in the grimy, dangerous conditions. You did boring, monotonous jobs. You suffered the labeling by society because you worked in a factory.

You would work the extra hours so that you could get the nice things that life offered. The things that seemed to come easier to other people but in your case you had to do a little extra to get them. . . .

Over the years many of us had the opportunity to make a decision, should I stay or should I move on to something else. Many, many people stayed on because of the promise.

They made decisions not to go to a new career because they were many years into the equation of which the promise weighed oh so heavily.

The promise was always out there.

The company always reminded anyone that would listen about how they were funding our pensions and used that as a bargaining chip when our wages or benefits were on the table.

It was always figured in as a benefit cost even though now some wonder if the company ever really intended to fulfill the promise.

Now here we are near the end of our careers, not as young as we used to be, many of us broken. When so many of us are so close to being able to cash in on the promise, the company is attempting to take it away from us. . . .

Mr. Speaker, this Congress has failed to protect American workers while focusing on protecting the privileged few.

It is time for these workers' stories to be heard and I am pleased to have this opportunity to share one of these stories.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL AND SMALL BUSINESS TELEWORK PROMOTION ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Federal and Small Business Telework Promotion Act" to assist our Nation's small businesses in establishing successful telework programs for their employees and to secure energy saving opportunities, like teleworking for our Nation's Federal employees.

Across America, numerous employers are responding to the needs of their employees and establishing telework programs. In 2000, there were an estimated 16.5 million teleworkers. By the end of 2004, there will be an estimated 30 million teleworkers, representing an increase of almost 100 percent.

Unfortunately, the majority of growth in new teleworkers comes from organizations employing over 1,500 people, while just a few years